

T H E

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The Union Movement.

(Continued from page 42.)

3. We now propose to deal briefly with the causes of the present union movement between the Free and U.P. Churches. The Free Church being the chief figure in the movement, we shall direct attention mainly to these causes as they lie within her pale. The U.P. Church stands very much where she did. It is the Free Church that has changed her ecclesiastical position, and put herself forward as the prime mover for union.

(1) The first cause we mention is unfaithfulness to original principles. The Free Church started out in 1843, claiming to be the true Church of Scotland. While breaking the State connection she still declared her adherence to the whole testimony of the Church of Scotland. She became the Church of Scotland Free from the trammels of unconstitutional State interference. She did not become the Church of Scotland Free from the principle of State acknowledgment and support. She protested against Erastianism on the one hand, and Voluntarism on the other. This is admitted, even at the present time, by all parties, Principal Rainy included. The fact is too plainly written in the Church's constitution to be denied. The utterances of her leaders in 1843 also proclaim with unmistakeable clearness that they were not Voluntaries, and that while departing from a vitiated Establishment, they were willing to return to a pure one. An eminent minister in the north, the late Rev. John Macdonald, Helmsdale, who thundered greatly against the moderates at the Disruption, said that he would rather become an Episcopal curate than a Voluntary. The Church also continued to hold without modification the doctrines of redemption as embodied in the Confession of Faith, believing these to be agreeable with the Word of God. But this state of things did not continue very long. In 1863 negotiations began on the subject of union with the U.P. Church, and they continued until 1873. But in the latter year they were broken off. This was due to the efforts of those who remained steadfast to the

Church's principles, and approved of no compromise. If the union party had persisted in their proceedings at that time, another disruption would have certainly taken place. The steadfast Free Churchmen were quite prepared to cut their connection with the unionists. Since this period, however, matters have not improved. The leaven of Voluntaryism and Arminianism has been working deadly havoc in the Free Church. Her leaders began to cherish a strong antagonism to the Established Church, and to the principle of Establishment, and for a number of years past have agitated with all their might for Disestablishment. In this they have been supported by large majorities in the annual Assemblies. Further, in 1892 a Declaratory Act was passed that made the two dangerous systems just named practically a part of the Church's creed. Yea, the foul head of Romanism, or Rationalism if you will, for there is no difference between the two in some features, appears to view. The Church or the Assembly is made the judge of the faith, and the supreme authority of the Word of God is invaded. The downgrade movement found legislative expression in this Declaratory Act. The Church became a new body altogether, a body quite akin to the U.P. in its principles. As a necessary and practical outcome of the change, negotiations for union have again been started. They have now stronger support than ever. The whole Church is in favour of them with the exception of a few not over determined opponents. The negotiations will, no doubt, prove a great success. Need we wonder at it. The Act of 1892 is just the U.P. flag hoisted over the citadel of the Free Church, and is there then any reason why the two parties should not take up quarters within the same walls? Recent Committee meetings between representatives of both bodies have agreed upon a basis of union in which further concessions have been made by the Free Church, and last Assembly approved of this basis.

(2) The second cause is the decay of real Christianity. Many are trumpeting forth this union movement as a sign of the grand Christian progress of our time, and nothing will convince them that it is a sign of anything else. For our part, we are convinced that the whole movement is a sign of spiritual decay. Never was there a time when there was more retrogression in those things that are vital to Christianity, and this affair is quite in harmony with the general drift of the time. Decay may lead to union as well as vitality. There is the union of the dead as well as of the living. There is the union of the hosts of hell as well as of the hosts of heaven. There is the union of bad men as well as of good. There may be vast combinations of men on the side of error as well as on the side of truth. Witness Romanism and Paganism. The fact then should never be forgotten that a union movement is not necessarily a good thing. It may be an evil, and that in no ordinary degree. In the case before us, we believe it to be a great evil. Notice the men who were opposed to union

at the first. They were in the majority of cases the best in the Church. At the Disruption the Free Church was endowed with a large measure of spiritual life. No doubt there was chaff among the wheat. But if she had kept her ground and gone on to greater attainments in divine things, she might have proved, by the blessing of God, a still more remarkable power for good in the land. Instead of this, she began to decline, and the union movement of 1863 to 1873 proved "a dry wind from the wilderness not to fan or cleanse." This was the impression of many of the godly at the time, and the result verified the impression. Breaches were made between brethren, and the same life, unity and zeal were not to be seen afterwards. Let no one say the faithful adherents to the Church's principles were to blame. It was their brethren who pushed on the union movement, thereby introducing a new and unsought for element, that were blameworthy. It is very significant that it is this section of the Church we have to thank for the innovations in worship and heresies in doctrine that have defiled her in late times. Not but some good and eminent men unwisely supported this movement. This circumstance, however, did not prevent the more degenerate section from going from bad to worse. It rather helped on their downward career. We take it, therefore, as a very important fact that the great majority of the pious people in the Free Church were opposed to this union movement in its first stages. Since that time the great bulk of the pious have been taken away, and in the judgment of God, few have risen to occupy their places. What a large cluster of eminent ministers and men have been removed since this downgrade current began to show itself! Their very names, too numerous to mention, should be a terror to any who, once professing to walk in their steps, are now being ensnared by the devices of the large but degenerate union party. The decline of spiritual life proceeded apace with the removal of the godly, and with the uprising of many in pulpit and pew, that had no real claim to the name. Of recent years also, a great number of the really spiritual people have left the so-called Free Church. It was impossible for them any longer to remain in connection with such a corrupt institution. So the majority have now everything in their favour. They are, no doubt, very active in many ways, but it is not the activity of real spiritual life. It is the activity of carnal effort, one of the eminent fruits of which is the present union movement.

An outstanding proof of the spiritual decline of the Free Church is the treatment she has given the Bible within recent years. Several of her professors have openly denied its infallibility, and this denial has been calmly tolerated by the Church. The same men are also advocates of the "Higher Criticism," which entirely undermines the inspiration and truthfulness of many parts of the Old Testament. Books have also been written, in which the base and unscriptural theory of evolution has been defended and

applauded, and the Church courts have complacently looked on. The Holy Scripture is the Word of the living God, the seed and sustenance of spiritual life. Can any Church that treats it as the fallible word of erring men, be said to be in a healthy spiritual condition? Assuredly not. Let any religious body whatsoever multiply its agencies and activities to the utmost possible extent, and deny the Word of God, and what is the result? That body immediately becomes as dead as a stone spiritually, and all its future movements are nothing more than the artificial exertions of a galvanised corpse. Such is the melancholy state of the so-called Free Church. Such is the preparation she has made for union with another body upon a basis that involves the compromise of not a few of the fundamental principles of the faith.

A Sermon.

BY REV. JAMES S. SINCLAIR, JOHN KNOX'S, GLASGOW.

(Continued from page 93.)

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*"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"*—HEB. ii. 3.  
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II.—The neglect of it: "if we neglect so great salvation." The apostle here calls attention to the possibility of neglecting "so great salvation," notwithstanding its unspeakable greatness. Let us notice:—

1. The special import of the word "neglect."

(1) What is here pre-supposed in the use of the word. The apostle gives his readers to understand that the salvation spoken of is not a thing afar off but a thing that is nigh, and that if they fail to embrace it they are, to say the very least, guilty of neglect. The words which succeed our text bring out this view: "which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." This salvation was at the first brought near to men in the preaching of the Lord of glory, and was then confirmed at a later date "unto us"—that is, unto the apostle himself and the Hebrews he was addressing—by them that heard Him. The counterpart of this exists in the Church, and shall exist to the end of time. We have the written record of salvation in the Scriptures. There the great salvation, in all its fulness, is made nigh, and if we have ears to hear we may hear the voice of Christ there speaking of it unto us. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—(John iii. 16.) Again, we have this salvation made nigh in the words of living ambassadors of Christ, of all true preachers of the Gospel. Christ said to His apostles: "Go ye into all the world,

and preach the gospel to every creature," and He gives the same commission now to all whom He has appointed for the work. Salvation is therefore brought to our very doors by the messengers of Christ. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."—(Rom. x. 8, 9.) All, therefore, who fail to appropriate the great salvation show conspicuous neglect of it, and that under the most favourable circumstances. They show themselves "a disobedient and gainsaying people."—(Rom. x. 21.)

(2) The precise meaning of "neglect." "Neglect" is one of the mildest terms that can be used in this connection. It is employed, however, with a wise purpose—that is, so as to include in its compass the widest circle possible of those who refuse to make choice of the great salvation. "Despise" and "hate" are stronger terms, and it is true that all who neglect this salvation in heart despise and hate it, but the use of this word proves that it is not necessary deliberately to despise and hate it in order to expose oneself to just condemnation; all that is necessary is simply to neglect it, to pass it by without acceptance. This as surely seals the final destruction of the sinner as if he were to display the most manifest and open hatred of it. The foolish virgins neglected to get oil in their vessels with their lamps, and were as certainly shut out of the kingdom at last as if they never had set out to meet the bridegroom at all.—(Matt. xxv. 1-12.)

2. The prevalence of neglect among Gospel hearers. "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"—(Isa. liii. 1.) This has been the cry of the preacher in most ages of the Church's history. The tendency to neglect the Gospel salvation is a universal one. Strange and sad, but true it is, that the very thing which should be most readily welcomed and attended to by the sons of men is that which they are most disposed to neglect and despise. The greater number of those who listened to Christ's words, in the days of His flesh, heeded them not, and He had to declare—"Ye will not come to me that ye might have life."—(John v. 40.) Again, the apostles were treated by Jews and Gentiles in a similar manner. The Jews—from whom, of all people, better things might have been expected—especially showed an inveterate hatred to the Gospel, and the way of salvation set forth in it. Stephen told them to their faces: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye."—(Acts vii. 51.) The Gentiles, also, frequently turned a deaf ear to the Gospel. They persecuted and killed many of Christ's ambassadors. "But," someone says, "did not many of the Jews, and especially of the Gentiles, gladly receive the tidings of salvation?" Yes, but the main tendency was to reject them, and if it were not for the intervention of a higher power, even the Holy

Spirit of God, this tendency would have held the day, and not one soul would have been saved. Such has been the case in subsequent ages, down to the present day. The universal course of mankind is against the Gospel, and it is only when the power of God accompanies it that souls receive it with joy. All true revivals of religion have had their origin, not in the natural inclinations of men, but in the mighty manifested energy of the Holy Ghost. Never was this truth more clearly proven than by what we see around us in the present day. We are now living in the closing years of the nineteenth century, and, after all that has been seen and heard of the Gospel of Christ for so many centuries, one might have expected that the tendency to neglect it would have been perceptibly checked. But the case is far otherwise. Never was there a more prevalent disposition to despise Christ and His salvation than at the present time. Multitudes, in this Christian country, are to-day showing not only neglect but utter contempt of Him who should be their most welcome friend, and of His salvation, which should be their chiefest joy and treasure. My hearer, are you among them? Such persons "count themselves unworthy of eternal life."—(Acts xiii. 46.)

3. Some marks of those who "neglect so great salvation." These are inward and outward.

(1) Some inward marks. One of these is spiritual blindness. The understandings of men are by nature darkened. Sin has blinded them to their miserable condition before God, and therefore they see no necessity for a way of salvation. All in their natural estate are, in fact, "darkness" itself.—(Eph. v. 8.) Sin also blinds them to the glory of the great salvation. They see not the excellency of its marvellous provision, nor its unspeakable suitableness to meet their case as lost sinners. Yea, they do not perceive the matchless glory of Christ Himself, who is the crown and head of it all. The reason is "the blindness of their heart." A second mark is self-righteousness. It is a characteristic of our fallen nature to delude us into the supposition—"I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing."—(Rev. iii. 17.) We imagine we are good enough, and therefore we are not prepared to admit any need of improvement, far less of a complete renewal. The self-righteous spirit is also wholly unwilling to submit to the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. This was a feature of the Jews, and this is a feature of the unregenerate heart still. Men prefer their own filthy rags to the glorious righteousness of Immanuel. "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness."—(Prov. xxx. 12.) A third mark is unbelief. "The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."—(Heb. iv. 2.) Perverse unbelief refuses to believe the testimony of God Himself concerning our lost estate and the way of recovery through Jesus Christ. It has the bold and awful effrontery to make God a liar. Multitudes are perishing

under its fell influence. They will believe anything and everything the world, the flesh, and the devil tell them, but they have no ear whatsoever for the voice of God or the good news of salvation. The consequence is that they perish for ever. "For if ye believe not that I am he," saith Christ, "ye shall die in your sins."—(John viii. 24.) A fourth mark is the love of sin. Not a few who appear to see something of their own need, and give credit, at least in an intellectual way, to God's Word, yet come short of the great salvation. The cause is undoubtedly the love of sin. They prefer sin to holiness, the world to Christ. Very often there is some darling lust which holds their affections, and which they will not let go. Sin has debased them to such a degree that, though all the terrors of hell and comforts of heaven are pressed upon their consideration, they continue quite obdurate and unimpressed. The love of sin has won their hearts, and the glorious salvation of the Gospel has no attraction for them. Such persons are "holden with the cords" of their own iniquity, and if they do not give up their carnal pleasure they shall be lost. They shall yet lift up their eyes, "being in torments."—(Luke xvi. 23.) A fifth mark is the spirit of procrastination. "To-morrow," says the soul, "I will attend to the things of religion, the things of eternity. I am at present too busy with other matters, and I need time and close reflection in order to study such high things." The young are disposed to exclaim—"It is time enough when I get older, when I begin to be more serious and settled in mind, to think of such a great and overwhelming thing as the salvation of the soul." The old are ready to say—"We have put off so long, and have become so hard and insensible with the occupations of the world, that it is now no use whatsoever to try to get up any concern for eternal things. We cannot do it, and we must therefore just move on as formerly, and perhaps we may obtain mercy at last." Some persons, who have anxieties as to eternity, are disposed to procrastinate owing to the difficulties in the way. "Oh," say they, "it is not an easy thing to attain salvation. There is so much sin in us that it is ten to one if ever we get victory over it. Besides, what is the use of all our attention to our souls if we are not among the elect, or the Spirit of God doesn't work in us? We must wait, at least, until we are in a better frame." Thus the spirit of delay, working sometimes even in a spiritual form, lets the precious moments of time to pass without improvement, and the soul hastens on towards a lost eternity. We would warn our hearers with our whole soul against such a spirit as this. The devil likes nothing better than to see it having the mastery over mankind. He thus lulls vast numbers of young and old into a sleep out of which they are not awakened until they hear the cry—"This night thy soul is required of thee." Never forget the warning and encouragement conveyed in the words: "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."—(2 Cor. vi. 2.)

(2) Some outward marks. The internal evils of which we have been speaking are not confined, in their effects, to the heart; they influence the outward life and pursuits of men. One of these marks is engagement in unlawful occupations. To be engaged in any business that involves a breach of God's commandments is one of the direct roads to destruction. The pursuit of anything whatsoever that is sinful hardens the soul in neglect of the great salvation. A second mark is excessive engrossment in lawful occupations. Many things that are perfectly lawful in themselves are a great snare. Some imagine that if they attend to their natural duties with diligence and conscientiousness that they have nothing more to be concerned about. But the truth is, if we give our hearts and lives exclusively to any object—however good—outside God, we make that thing an idol, and it proves a mighty barrier between us and eternal salvation. The lawful occupations of life form a greater trap to multitudes than the unlawful. The latter lead plainly away from God, and a natural conscience tells us they are wrong, but the former, being right enough in themselves, have—owing to the blindness of our hearts—a strong tendency to delude us for ever. They lead us to “neglect so great salvation,” and we know it not. The Apostle John speaks, however, in language we need not mistake—“If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”—(1 John ii. 15.) A third mark is a life of worldly pleasure. There are unlawful pleasures that drown souls without fail in perdition. Such are the pleasures of drunkenness and sensuality, the pleasures of the theatre, the ballroom, the concert. They steep souls in ever-deepening spiritual insensibility. If there is the least concern about salvation in the heart of any, they could not take a better means of quenching it than by indulging in the pleasures we have enumerated. These are the ways of death. There are other pleasures, lawful in themselves, that, if not kept in their own place, will lead to the same end. The pleasures of home, and family, and friends have their own value and preciousness, but if they are made the end of life they prove a sweet drug to poison the soul for eternity. Many highly respectable people feel no want if they have these pleasures. They are quite satisfied, and have no greater happiness to look forward to. Their heaven is in this world, and therefore they neglect the great salvation. Being lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, they need expect no entrance into the eternal inheritance. They “shall lie down in sorrow.”—(Ps. l. 11.) A fourth mark is undue fear of the reproach and persecution of the world. Many Gospel hearers are afraid of exposing themselves to these things. Some say to themselves—“My friends and companions will make a mock and ridicule of me if I begin to be concerned about religion. They will cast at me every disagreeable name, and call me a hypocrite or a fool, and I can't stand these things.” Others say—“Oh, I have to make my way in the world; I must push forward to a good position; I have to live and get on. What if I

begin to attend to salvation now? I will only damage my prospects, and make the men who would help me mine enemies." Others, again, are ready to say—"I like to be in with that which is popular and fashionable. What is the use of beginning to be gloomy and discontented with one's state? That will only spoil one's chances of the favour and applause of respectable society. I can't bear to be excluded from the pleasant companionship of the world, and to be viewed as a mere companion for old wives." Thus many a poor ignorant soul reasons. Young men and women, especially, are led astray with such vain thoughts. They shrink from reproach and persecution. But what a fearful thing it is to sell a happy eternity for the smile of an ungodly world, to prefer the wretched applause of dying men to the everlasting love of the eternal God? Infinitely better it is to follow the example of Moses, who, when he had all the riches, pleasures, and honours of the world at his feet, chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward."—(Heb. xi. 25, 26.)

III. The warning here given to all neglectors: "How shall we escape?" This warning was addressed, in the first place, to the Hebrews. The apostle reminds them in the preceding verse of the consequences of disobedience under the old dispensation, and now assures them that the same, if not more terrible consequences, will follow neglect of salvation under a more glorious dispensation. He says "we," not "you," identifying himself as a Hebrew with them, and humbly admitting that he is not beyond deriving benefit from the warning he conveys to others. This warning sets forth the impossibility of the neglectors of so great salvation escaping just punishment.

1. God's character requires that they shall be punished. He is holy and righteous, and cannot but punish sin. These neglectors of His salvation have despised His law and trampled on His Gospel. They have lightly esteemed the most glorious manifestations He has given of Himself. They have cast dishonour upon His great name. His name and perfections are seen in the great salvation. Love, wisdom, righteousness, and holiness shine forth in their supreme excellency in the face of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. God's justice, therefore, demands that the despisers of His glory, as it is so abundantly revealed in the person and work of His dear Son, should be punished. It is impossible, in consistency with the rectitude of the divine character, that such should escape. Again, those who neglect "so great salvation" ruin their own souls and bodies. These were originally created in the image of God, and were not intended to be the slaves of sin and Satan. The soul is exceedingly precious—the most precious thing under the sun. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what

shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—(Mark viii. 36, 37.) They, then, who ruin their souls and bodies by neglecting the very means of salvation, which God has graciously sent to their doors, cannot escape His righteous judgment. They have sold His precious property to the devil, and they must suffer for it throughout eternity. Lastly, all God's perfections are against the final neglectors of His salvation. Goodness, love, and mercy have been contemned, as well righteousness and holiness have been offended. God will judge the world by His Son, and the wrath of the Lamb will be unspeakably more terrible in that day than the curses of a broken law. His wrath is the expression of the divine, holy indignation against salvation neglectors, the abusers and despisers of rich mercy and grace. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."—(Rev. i. 7.)

2. God's arm shall inflict the punishment. "How shall we escape?" There is no escaping the arm of Jehovah, when it is stretched forth. It will be vain to flee to the mountains and the hills for safety when the Lord rises up to take vengeance upon His enemies. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."—(2 Cor. v. 10.) No creature, small or great, shall be absent. It will be of no avail to cry "to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"—(Rev. vi. 16, 17.) The Lord's hand will find out all fleeing sinners, and "they shall not escape." The length of His arm is infinite, and there shall be no corner of the earth that He cannot reach. Again, the power of His arm is infinite. His arm is full of power. The same arm which is now mighty to save every poor soul that puts his trust in it will then be mighty to destroy. Capernaum sinners, who have been exalted to heaven, shall be cast down to hell. They shall have a doubly deeper hell than the heathen who never heard of Christ or salvation. O, you that have been brought up in pious families and have heard the words of the Gospel from your infancy—but are still outside Christ, remember, if you continue so, your condemnation will be terrible at the last day. Your godly friends, the nearest and dearest in this world, will then declare their acquiescence in the righteous sentence of the Judge. You will have then no one to pray or to speak a word for you. Every good and holy being in heaven and earth will be against you. Yea, your own mouth will be stopped, and you will hear the awful voice of the glorious Judge saying—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."—(Matt. xxv. 40.)

3. The punishment itself. "How shall we escape" from it?

It is everlasting. It is fire, the most terrible and penetrating of all agents that inflict pain. O, my dear friends, you that are still neglecting the great salvation, let the following words of the apostle ring in your ears, enter into your hearts, and have their due effect upon you, if so be that the Spirit of God may bless them to the awakening of your poor souls:—"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."—(2 Thess. i. 7-9.) "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" May these words, if it be according to the will of God, prove the forerunner of mercy and not of doom to some of your souls, and to His name shall be the praise.

Meeting of Synod.

(DRAFT OF MINUTES.)

AT Inverness, and within the Artillery Hall, on Tuesday, the 5th July, at twelve o'clock noon, which day the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met. Sederunt, from the Southern Presbytery—Rev. A. Macrae, Rev. J. S. Sinclair, ministers, and Mr. Donald Kelly, elder; from the Northern Presbytery—Rev. J. R. Mackay, moderator, Rev. D. Macdonald, Rev. D. Macfarlane, Rev. G. Mackay, and Rev. John Macleod, ministers, with Messrs. John Maclean, Hector Macpherson, and Alexander Maclean, elders. The moderator preached from Ezra ix. 8, and thereafter constituted the Synod with prayer. After the roll was made up and called, the minutes of the former meeting were read and approved of. Mr. Angus Fraser was appointed officer of court. Thereafter a Committee of two from the Southern Presbytery—Messrs. Sinclair and Macrae were appointed to examine and report on the records of the Northern Presbytery. Messrs. George Mackay and Macleod were appointed from the Northern Presbytery to examine and report on the records of the Southern Presbytery. These four along with the moderator, who *ex officio* belongs to this Committee, were appointed to arrange for the business of the evening sederunt. The moderator then intimated that the Synod would adjourn to meet here again at 5.30 p.m. Closed with prayer.

(Signed) JOHN MACLEOD, Clerk.

At Inverness, and within the Artillery Hall, on Tuesday, the 5th of July, at 5.30 p.m., which day and at which hour the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met again in terms of the adjournment, and the meeting was opened with devotional exercises. Sederunt as before. After the roll was called, the

clerk brought in the report of the business Committee, which was approved of, and is as follows :—

1. Business arrangement Report.
2. Reports on the Records of Presbytery.
3. Financial Report for the year.
4. Appointment of Collections for ensuing year.
5. Report on the Education of Students.
6. Remits from the Presbyteries.
7. Appointment of Auditors.
8. Any other competent business.
9. Appointment of next Meeting.

The Rev. J. S. Sinclair then reported that Mr. Macrae and he had examined the records of the Northern Presbytery and had found them correct, and the Rev. George Mackay reported that the Rev. Mr. Macleod and he had examined the records of the Southern Presbytery, and had found them correct. The treasurer, who was present, was then called upon to read the audited financial report for the year, from 31st March, 1897, to 31st March, 1898, which was as follows:—Balance of Sustentation Fund, 31st March, 1897, £828 7s. 9d.; Contributions for the year and interest, £1,898 11s. 7½d., total, £2,726 19s. 4½d. Paid out, £2,103 13s. 1½d., leaving balance at 31st March, 1898, of £623 6s. 3d. Missionary and Catechist Collection receipts, £146 8s., paid to Sustentation fund account, £146 8s. Students aid fund, balance at 31st March, 1897, £76 3s. 7d., Contributions, £198 1s. 6d., total £274 5s. 1d. Paid out, £219 2s., leaving balance at 31st March, 1898, of £55 3s. 1d. General building fund, balance at 31st March, 1897, £60 16s., receipts, £68 0s. 5d., total £128 16s. 5d., Discharge, £62 7s., leaving balance at end of year of £66 9s. 5d. Shieldaig building fund, balance of last account, £183 9s., receipts for year, £93 18s. 5d., total £277 7s. 5d., Discharge, paid out, £273 3s. 9d., balance at 31st March, 1898, £4 3s. 8d. Mission fund, last balance, £11 7s. 8d., Contributions, £79 18s. 1d., total £91 5s. 9d., Discharge, paid out, 12s., balance at 31st March, 1898, £90 13s. 9d.

After the report was read, the Rev. Mr. Macrae moved, and the Rev. D. Macfarlane, seconded the following deliverance, which was unanimously approved of:—"The Synod approve of the financial statement, and thank the treasurer, and in order to superintend generally the financial business of the Church, they approve of the appointment of a Financial Committee, consisting of Rev. J. R. Mackay, Rev. J. Macleod, Rev. Neil Cameron, Mr. Duncan Crawford, Oban, and Mr. Angus Clunas, Inverness, with Mr. Macleod as convener, and they further order the financial statement to be printed and circulated among the Congregations."

Thereafter the Synod took into consideration the matter of the annual collections, when Rev. George Mackay moved, and Rev. James Sinclair, seconded, "That this Synod appoint that the

following collections should be made during the current year, viz. :—(1) Missionaries and Catechists ; (2) Students ; (3) Church building ; (4) Foreign Missions. That the Synod in re-appointing the Church building collection would direct the attention of the friends of the Church to the fact that the debt on Shildaig manse is a debt on the whole Church, and appeal to them to consider the necessity of wiping away this debt at once. The Synod order an extract of this deliverance to be printed and given to the Rev. Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Clunas." This deliverance became the unanimous finding of the court. Thereupon the clerk moved and Mr. Sinclair seconded, that the collection for Catechists should be fixed for the first Sabbath of October ; for Students, on the first Sabbath of December ; for Church building, on the first Sabbath of March ; for Foreign Missions, on the first Sabbath of May. This was agreed to.

Thereafter, a verbal report from the Theological Committee was submitted and approved of. The steps were detailed that had been taken for the education of students last winter. Mr. Macleod then intimated his resignation of the honourable office the Synod had assigned to him, by taking part in the education of our students, and moved as follows, in connection with the whole matter of theological education:—"That Rev. D. Beaton be appointed as joint tutor with Rev. J. R. Mackay. That for next winter the classes be held in one place. That the Theological Committee be re-appointed, and Rev. Mr. Mackay be convener. That the Committee consider and report on the advisability of having a system of inter-sessional examinations, and in the event of their recommending such a course, that they submit a syllabus of work proposed and secure examiners for the subjects. That the Committee inform the Clerks of Presbytery of the subjects of entrance and exit examinations, so that students who are either entering on their studies, or who have finished their course, may have ample time to prepare. That the salary of Mr. Beaton be fixed by the Financial Committee." This motion was seconded by Mr. Sinclair, and was unanimously agreed to. A motion was then submitted by the Rev. Mr. Macrae, and seconded by Mr. D. Kelly, but afterwards by them withdrawn, anent the recognition of students as students of the Church. The discussion showed that the Synod was desirous to guard the entrance to the ministry, and in lieu of the original motion, one moved by Mr. Sinclair, and seconded by Mr. George Mackay, became the finding of the court. By this motion the whole subject under discussion was remitted to a committee, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Cameron, Macrae, and John R. Mackay, to consider and report on to the next meeting of Synod.

Thereafter the Synod passed on to consider remits from the Presbyteries. The case of the Raasay congregation was first considered, and on the motion of the clerk, seconded by Mr.

Kelly, it was agreed to make a general collection all over the Church on the first Sabbath of September, in order to meet this case. In connection with the Catechists who receive a sum of £10 or under, it was agreed that their salaries should not be affected by the reduction agreed upon at last Synod. This was done on the motion of Rev. D. Macfarlane, seconded by Rev. George Mackay. In the case of Alexander MacIennan, Rona, it was agreed, on the motion of Mr. Macfarlane, seconded by Mr. Kelly, that his salary be raised to £36 per annum. A statement was then submitted by Mr. Sinclair on behalf of his Deacons' Court, promising £110 per annum to the Sustentation Fund. On the motion of Mr. Macrae, seconded by the clerk, this was held to be satisfactory. Thereupon auditors were appointed for the present year, and Messrs. Angus Fraser and Charles Maclean, who had received the Synod's thanks for their previous work, were appointed auditors, and accepted office.

The Synod was now declared open for any other competent business, and then Mr. Macrae moved, and the clerk seconded, that during the present year each of the ministers should preach once on our Church principles in connection particularly with present movements in the direction of union. It was then agreed that Mr. D. Graham, Lochinver, be asked to go to Peterhead and Fraserburgh, to hold services for our fishermen there for six weeks during the fishing season, and it was agreed upon, that at the winter Synod two of the ministers should be appointed to see about this matter for next year.

The Rev. Mr. Macrae then called the attention of the court to the action of the Northern Presbytery in the case of the Rev. Allan Mackenzie, and moved that the Synod approve of the same, and also that the names of those who had ceased to be members of Presbytery should be carefully erased from the presbytery roll. This was seconded by Mr. Sinclair and agreed to.

The matter of appointing presbytery elders was then considered, and it was agreed to see to their appointment within two months from this date.

In connection with the Magazine, it was remitted to the Magazine Committee to get the accounts audited, and to report to next meeting of Synod as to the management of the whole business.

It was then agreed, on the motion of Mr. George Mackay, seconded by Mr. Macrae, that Mr. Beaton's request to be allowed to go to Skye for sometime be granted, and that he do what he can for supplying English services there, until he can engage in public Gaelic services.

It was then agreed that the Synod should meet again on Tuesday after the second Sabbath of November, at twelve o'clock noon, in Glasgow. Closed with prayer.

(Signed) JOHN MACLEOD, *Clerk of Synod.*

Diary of the Rev. Alexander Macleod, of Uig and Rogart.

(Continued from page 98.)

UIG, June 25th, 1827.—Yesterday the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered in this place, and much of the presence of the Lord appeared in the congregation. There were from 800 to 1,000 communicants formerly in the parish, there being a habit of indiscriminate communion. This is the first occasion we had the communion here in my time, and only six individuals have come forward to the Lord's table. There were no more than 20 communicants in all. The whole of the unworthy communicants kept back, and a great many of our young converts did not take upon them to come forward. The congregation was much impressed through the whole day. When the elements were presented, there appeared as a shower of revival from the presence of the Lord through the whole congregation, and in serving the first and second tables (there being two tables only) the heavenly dew of gracious influences was evidently falling down on the people in so conspicuous a manner that not only the friends of Christ but also the enemies of the Lord cannot forget an occasion and a scene so singularly remarkable, in which all acknowledge that God was of a truth among us. But all this might be called the commencement of what happened afterwards, for when our young converts saw the uncommon liberty that was granted to the pastors in addressing those who sat at the table they were still more impressed and filled, as it were, with new wine and holy solemnity. Much disappointment now appeared among several of them that they had not taken out tokens, and so were not prepared to come forward. Pungent conviction, towards the evening, took hold of some of them for not obeying Christ's command. It was a night ever to be remembered in this place in which the whole of it was spent in religious exercises, whether in private or together with others, in cases mingled with unusual instances of joy and sorrow. While these things were carried on, the ungodly themselves were in tears, and iniquity for a time dwindled into nothing, covered her brazen face, and was greatly ashamed. On Monday, many felt sadly disappointed when they saw that the ungodly had kept back from the table, and when they perceived that the Lord's people were so greatly refreshed in communicating His death, that they did not timeously prepare for the duty, and that, after the Lord in every way cleared the way for them, they were not ready. This circumstance caused much sorrow, and more so as there is no doubt but some supposed that some of the most promising of the Lord's people would not communicate at this time. But when they saw that those went forward, and that themselves were not ready, and when they were convinced then in their consciences that they were led to follow the example of men

than sincere regard to Christ's command and the commemoration of His dying love, the whole circumstances of the case came home with peculiar force to their consciences, and they were humbled low in the dust. But this prepared their souls for receiving the excellent sermon preached by the Rev. Mr. Macdonald on the following day, from John xvi. 22—"And ye now therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice." The Lord's people were greatly impressed and refreshed by this sermon, and they descended from the mount with songs and praises.

August 22nd, 1828.—What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits to me? Thou hast been my sun and shield, and my deliverer in the day of battle. On the 16th day of this month—being the preparation day before the communion at Stornoway—I was obliged to come away, as I saw it was my duty not to address any of the tables, finding that, owing to the description of people Mr. C—— admitted, the Lord's people in general declined going forward. In these circumstances, there were no tables but for a certain class of people, and, as I declined serving any, Mr. C—— would not give me permission to preach, on which account I immediately retired. Though this was trying, I hope the testimony was faithful and will be of service, in this and future generations, to the Church of Christ in these western islands of Scotland, and, that what I have done in this affair will prove by the divine blessing to be of service for promoting the interest of the Messiah's kingdom in these remote corners of the vineyard, and stand as a good precedent for any of the faithful ministers of Christ in case of any one of them being placed in such trying circumstances as I on that occasion, in or after my lifetime. I hope the happiness I already enjoy from a consciousness of walking in the line of duty at that time will unspeakably more than compensate to me all these frowns of men and devils for holding and supporting the truth as it is in Jesus, and may also prove of unspeakable support and consolation and encouragement to any of my fellow-Christian ministers meeting at any time with a similar trial in the exercise and duties of their official capacity.

January 1st, 1829.—At the commencement of this new year, it well becomes me to renew my vows, and to express my sense of His innumerable mercies by putting up my tent at the renowned and celebrated Ebenezer of my help. Give a retrospective view, O my immortal soul, to Jehovah's wonderful care of thee since you came to the world. When eight, nine, and ten years of age, think of the instances you remember in which the law of nature was checking you then, when you committed any actual sin—Sabbath or week day—though you were then a stranger to grace. Think of how early you were put to school in a remote district of the country, but under the religious instruction of pious parents and teacher. Think of how circumspectly they watched over your education and morals during your years of minority, and

consider how strictly for your benefit—as well as for their own comfort and salvation—they regarded the laws of God and man, and trained you to pay a reverential regard to the former and due respect to the latter, as thy Lord commands. Consider, O my soul, the first religious impressions you had under the means of grace, the places in which you felt these impressions so powerful that you could not well command yourself, when between the years of 15 and 18. Remember the time of private prayer in the field at Duirinish (Lord Reay's country), also at Ullapool and Reef, in Lochbroom, when you were made as a fountain of unceasing tears and love that could not be stopped in the presence of thy God. Remember the feast you had in Dingwall, on a sacramental occasion, when you could not deny that you got Benjamin's portion of 300 pieces of silver and five changes of raiment, when the rest of the brethren were more scantily supplied. You little knew at this time, O my soul, that you yourself must be appointed in due time to be a teacher of others. Recollect how you went to Edinburgh to prosecute your studies, without money in your purse or (to your knowledge) any friend before you, but how soon the Lord raised friends for you then and money as you needed to prosecute your education until it was finished! Call to mind all the particulars of thy marriage, which took place in November, 1814, the singular circumstance with which it was attended in all its bearings, and the remarkable interpositions of thy mighty Lord for thy protection and for accomplishing the desire of thine heart at this critical event. Let these things be for ever wondrous in thine eyes. Add to all these wonders that the Lord has spared *us* yet together for mutual help and consolation. Let it be to Thy glory and praise! Think of thy license to preach the Gospel, thy appointment to the Dundee and Cromarty charges, and the number of friends raised for thee in these places both for thy temporal and spiritual welfare. Think of your remarkable appointment to this county and parish, and the success which the Lord thy God gave thee in preaching the everlasting Gospel. How many under your ministry received it, indeed, as the living words of the everlasting God! Lo, children are here and there born to God, and churches are planted in the desert and desolate places. Think of thy remarkable deliverance from a watery grave on the 10th June, in the year 1825, and thy remarkable deliverance and restoration from that severe illness from which none expected thy recovery in February, 1826. Hitherto the Lord helped. O think of His deliverances from the snares and enmity of wicked men who were on the watch to entrap thy feet. Look always to Jesus, the Captain of salvation, for all that has been done, all that is still doing, and all that is to be done. Speed your pace, and post on more swiftly with renewed ardour and diligence in every commanded duty. Urge thy heart with more vigorous and lively step towards Immanuel's country, and let hours, and days, and years roll till thou enter the joy of thy Lord.

"The Scotsman" on the Impending Union.

THE following able article appeared on Thursday, the 2nd June. The only statements we are disposed to call in question are such as give a too high estimate of the present position of the Established Church, and express approval of the liberty of opinion now to be found in the Churches:—

"Now that the Synod and Assemblies have come and gone, the country may do worse than ask what they have left behind them. There can be no hesitation as to the answer. That which entitles the Presbyterian Parliaments of the year to a place in the public recollection is the fact that an irrevocable step has been taken by two of them to break once more the historic continuity of our Scottish Church life, and to prepare a new battle ground for a Presbyterianism divided against itself. While the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church have resolved to begin the twentieth century as a single new Church, with a new name and a new constitution, the Church of Scotland stands where it did, and is resolved so to stand; but at the same time it has given its approval to a proposed Declaratory Act, the object of which is to proclaim an open door for the admission of all who cherish a loyal attachment to the old historic Church of the Reformation. On the new lines thus laid down, the next century will see a keen struggle between two large Presbyterian Churches for the adhesion and support of the people of Scotland; and at the same time an ecclesiastico-political struggle for the overthrow or maintenance of an Established Church. For a few years yet the Disestablishment agitation will hardly be able to do more than it has been doing for the last few years—keeping itself alive and hoping for better times. If, as seems not impossible, the United Church comes into being on the eve of the next general election, there will doubtless then be a strong effort to get a prominent place for the Disestablishment issue; but the new Church will not then have found or tested its strength, and politicians will probably be as callous as they are now. But it may be taken as certain that as soon as possible after the union is consummated the United Church will resume the Disestablishment agitation with all its heart and soul and strength, because—and this will be the grand feature of the new situation—it will be founded on Disestablishment principles, and its success as a popular Church will depend on successful aggression against the State Church.

A Church founded on Disestablishment principles is a new thing in Scotland. All the seceding bodies, as Dr. Leishman has just reminded us, came out with the intention of realising their own ideal of a national Church. One by one they have drifted into Voluntarism, and they are showing a tendency to drift into Congregationalism. The Free Church has been the last to cast itself clear of the old moorings, and it is now doing so with

difficulty and not without a painful moral wrench, because, more than any other seceding Church, it had embedded the Church and State principle in its constitution. Its distinctive character was that it was at once anti-Erastian and anti-Voluntary. It would have nothing to do with the Voluntaries. It proclaimed itself the true Church of Scotland, the Church of Scotland free. It assumed from the first the form and organisation of the national Church, co-extensive with the nation, maintaining the whole theoretical constitution of the Church of Scotland, and claiming an indefeasible title to the status and endowments of the Church of Scotland. All these claims it is now going to abandon. It is going to eliminate from its constitution everything that has hitherto separated it from the Voluntaries. It is going to give up its individuality and its name as the Free Church of Scotland. It is even going to give up the Confession of Faith and the Bible as its standards. No sophisticated rhetoric can conceal the fact that the Free Church as it has existed and testified since 1843 is going to put an end to itself. When, along with the United Presbyterian Church, it has formed a new United Church, the Free Church will have passed into history. Both the name and the thing will be no more. A member of the United Church will not be a Free Churchman. He will have cast himself off from the name, the testimony, the history of the Free Church. If he has been a Free Churchman before the union, he will have to call himself by a new name and to get to himself a new loyalty. The latter will be a difficult business. The strength of the Free Church hitherto has rested largely on the ardent loyalty and devotion of its members to their own Church. Its name, its testimony, its origin, and history have been dear to them. They may be said to take pleasure in its stones, and its very dust to them is dear. They will not find it easy to transfer their loyalty and attachment to the United Church and its new principles. It is true that under the articles of Union they will be free individually, and also congregationally, where existing congregations continue separate, to profess theoretic adherence to old Free Church principles; but mere individual loyalty of this kind must soon die out, and congregational loyalty will not only be an obstacle to real corporate Union, but it will give a fresh and powerful impulse to the spirit of congregationalism already at work. That, perhaps, is the reason why it is proposed to omit the word Presbyterian from the name of the United Church.

The United Church, as a corporate body, will have no inheritance in the Disruption. It is true that the Claim of Right and the Free Church Protest are mentioned in the Questions and referred to in the Formula proposed for the United Church, but it is in such a way as to make it clear that only such parts of these documents are to be binding as may be accepted by Voluntaries. An old Free Churchman may mentally adhere to the whole of them, but no one need do so, and no one will be assumed to have

done so. Some readers may have been startled by the assertion that the Free Church is also going to abandon the Confession of Faith and the Bible as Church standards; but the statement is literally true. A 'Free Church Layman' has already in our columns pointed out the significant alteration proposed in the form of words by which adhesion to the Confession of Faith is to be declared. It is no longer to be adhesion to the Confession, but to 'the doctrine of this Church, set forth in the Confession.' At present a Free Churchman is asked, 'Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith, approved by former General Assemblies of this Church, to be founded upon the Word of God, and do you acknowledge the same as the confession of your faith?' The United Churchman will be asked, 'Do you sincerely own and believe the doctrine of this Church, set forth in the Confession of Faith, &c.?' The difference is manifestly radical. The United Churchman need not believe the doctrine of the Confession of Faith except in so far as it has been explicitly approved by 'this Church,' that is, the United Church. Then, as to the Bible. The United Churchman, in declaring his adhesion to 'the doctrine of this Church,' will be asked also to declare that 'he acknowledges the said doctrine as expressing the sense in which he understands the Holy Scriptures.' Is the doctrine of the Church to be interpreted in the light of the Scriptures, or are the Scriptures to be understood in the sense—interpreted in the light—of whatever doctrine the United Church by Declaratory Acts or tacitly may adopt? Clearly both the Bible and the Confession of Faith must be understood in the sense of 'the doctrine of this Church.' Another curious fact is that there will be equal liberty in the new Church to modify the form of Presbyterianism. The Free Churchman vows to support and defend Presbyterian government 'by Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies.' The United Churchman will merely acknowledge the Presbyterian government and discipline 'as authorised in this Church,' without mention of its characteristic institutions. All this liberty may be very admirable. Far be it from us to condemn it; we are more inclined to praise. But the point is that there is to be a most decided and irrevocable break in the continuity of our Church life. We are not going to have simply two of our old Churches united. We are going to have a new Church, radically different from, at any rate, the Free Church. At the same time we do not suppose that the new Church will show any sudden haste to break away from the traditional attitude towards the Bible and the Confession of Faith. That will be a gradual and almost imperceptible process. Its one distinctive feature for a long time to come will be its Voluntarism. It will be nothing if not a Liberationist Church. Its mission will be to destroy the State Church. Disestablishment will be the one bond of union, the one distinctive principle, and the one common bond of loyalty

among all its members. Shall we ever see such devotion to the United Church as we have seen to either of the existing Churches? Will the people of Scotland rally to such a Church as opposed to the Church which maintains the name, the status, the standards, the traditions, and the whole testimony of the historic Church of Scotland?"

Brief Notes of Sermons.

BY THE LATE REV. DR. JOHN KENNEDY, DINGWALL.

VII.

"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."—1 THESS. v. 18.

THIS verse and the two verses that go before combine to enforce three duties—"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks."

I. "Rejoice evermore." This is a strange counsel. Down here in the world are not the children of God mourners? They are far from the Father's house, in the wilderness, tempted, afflicted, and persecuted by the world, and they know nought of the Father's house but what they see by faith in the Word of God. All this is true. But still they are called on to rejoice evermore. Why not? They are to rejoice in the Lord. He is their portion, and the source of their joy will never run dry; it cannot even be diminished. They have the Lord as their portion, His grace for their salvation, and glory awaiting them. Surely they ought to rejoice. They are to rejoice in all cases and sets of circumstances. When they lose parents, children, the desire of their eyes, or the partner of their lives, when they are bereft of what the world calls their all, still they are to rejoice. God is still theirs, and the all of His grace.

II. "Pray without ceasing." "O, that spoils all," you say, "for, if they are to be always praying, then there must be poverty, wants to be supplied, and sins to be confessed. I cannot understand how they can rejoice and pray." There is one thing, my friend, you have yet to learn, how one can rejoice and mourn at the same time. You have only one heart, and that heart can only be exercised in one way. But these children of light have two hearts, an old heart that pours in upon the new that which causes it to mourn, and the new heart upon which shines the grace of God causing it to rejoice. It is when having most cause to mourn they also rejoice most. "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him." And think you, Is there no joy in that look? The very bitterness adds to the joy.

"Pray without ceasing." Can a soul be always consciously praying? I do not say that, but I do say this, we ought always

to be in a praying frame. "I did something to-day when doing which I could not pray." Very likely. If you have suspicions of yourself in the doing of a thing, you cannot be in a praying frame. It is possible, however, to go to duty in a praying frame, lift up our hearts in prayer as opportunity affords, and carry a praying frame out of the duty with us.

III. "In everything give thanks." "In everything" means in every place, at all times, and in all sets of circumstances. There is no case in which we can be which does not give opportunity for thankfulness. Joseph in prison, falsely charged and condemned, thou must praise there as surely as when on the throne thou rulest the whole land of Egypt. Job, sitting in dust, scraping thyself with a potsherd, with no friend near thee but the wife who counselled thee to curse God and die, and all thy children dead, even thou art called to thankfulness as surely as when thou didst rejoice in the comforts of home and children. David, in the Cave of Adullain, a wanderer away from home, family, and all the comforts and honours of the throne, thou art called there to thankfulness. The Church, as we hear it wail the Lamentations, was in a sad plight, but from the depths she could offer up the thanksgiving, "It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed." It is the will of God, the will of God in Christ Jesus, that we be thankful in everything. O well, if it be His will in Christ Jesus, we know that in Him God arranges all things according to His everlasting covenant, and that no trial can touch us but what is ordered by divine wisdom according to the behests of divine love, whether we can see it or not. It is the will of God "concerning you," that is, you who are "in Christ Jesus." His death was our death. His death which was the fruit of ours shall bring forth to us the fruit of everlasting salvation. And in Him, standing in His righteousness, we can be in no circumstances where thanks are not due to God.

VIII.

"But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God that I may declare all thy works."—Ps. lxxiii. 28.

I. What is implied in drawing near to God.

II. The good which results from drawing near to Him.

III. The resolution of each one who has found it good to draw near to God.

I. Every act of worship is a drawing near to God. Even such is the drawing near with the lips, the honouring with the mouth. One of two things must be true of every act of worship, either we blaspheme or glorify God. What a solemn alternative is thus involved in our professed acts of worship. What is implied in a true drawing near to God? We must come as sinners, in and by Christ, in the exercise of the Spirit. I must come as a sinner. It is as such that God calls me. He sent His Son to call sinners

to repentance. There are three things about which a soul, in earnest seeking salvation, will be anxious. Can God be what He is and I be saved? Will He be willing to receive me if I come? Can He let me, a sinner, having nothing I can claim as my own but sin, into the holiest? In Christ alone can the sinner find these questions answered. Can God be just and justify me a sinner? Christ was afflicted for the sins of His people, and God was well pleased with the affliction of His Son, wherefore He exalted Him to the midst of the throne. In Christ mercy and truth met, righteousness and peace embraced. He magnified the law and satisfied justice: He is thus the way to the Father. In Him God can show mercy to chief sinners. Is God willing to receive sinners? Yes. He proved His willingness in the commendation of His love, the sending of His Son. He raised Him up in token of His satisfaction, and in Him shall His people be raised up. Will He let me in, a sinner, as I am? I will not come apart from Christ. He came to save sinners, and as a sinner I cast myself on Him. God's call is "Come and let us reason together," and resting on His righteousness, leaning on His grace, both in Christ, I shall come in to the Father. He has promised to hear the cry of the afflicted. He heard the cry of His Son in His afflictions, as we have it in the twenty-second Psalm, and that is our warrant for expecting an answer to our prayer. We are to take His Word, and say, "Here is Thy Word, O Lord, do as Thou hast said."

II. The good which results from drawing near to God. This may be summed up in breathings of hope, tastings of love, and glimpses of glory.

(1) Hope. This hope is in the mercy of God. Mercy, grace, salvation. I cannot hope for salvation, except I see it as mercy to me. Salvation for sinners. If I can get a view of that as possible in accordance with the character of God I can rejoice in it. But God gives more than that. He enables His people to say, "Salvation is mine, Christ is mine and I am His." He gives them sometimes to be assured that salvation is theirs.

(2) Tastings of love. Sometimes only sips can be taken. When one is fevered and the lips are parched with thirst only a drop on the point of a spoon can be given. No more could be taken. Thus is it sometimes with the child of God. But at other times larger, fuller, draughts of love are given and can be enjoyed.

(3) Glimpses of glory. These are glimpses that make us lie low. The lower we are under a sense of the glory the more we can trust it is of the right kind. There is a rejoicing in the hope of glory. This comes from such tastings of the love of God in Christ that we feel we are loved with an everlasting love, a love that has been from everlasting, and is to endure to all eternity. I, a poor worm, lying in between two eternities of love, carried through trial and affliction, kept and preserved, and made to rejoice in the hope of being for ever with the Lord.

III. The resolution of those who have found it good to draw near to God. That is, to declare the wonderful works of God. They do this by their lives and conversation, and by speaking when an opportunity and a call from God call them to do so. They speak to God in secret. They sing a song of praise to Him. But how was the Psalmist able to declare the works of God? Hear what he says, "I have trusted in the Lord God." Divine grace must be brought to the work of praising divine glory. God hears the heart sing when the praise is too great for the lips to utter, just as the heart prays sometimes in groaning. But our lives ought to declare to the world the grace of God. We ought so to live as to be separate from the works and cares and pleasures of the world, that men might see in us the fruit of the work of God. And we must speak for Him to men. We have not to go out of our place thus to speak. If we have been in our closet having fellowship with Him, we will come forth from it wishing to speak of the wonderful works of God to our fellowmen.

Letters of the late Rev. Archibald Cook.

(XI.)

DAVIOT FREE MANSE, 4th October, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I fear you will think that I have forgotten you, but I can honestly say that I have you daily on my mind in private, though my prayers are, I fear, not much worth. I trust you enjoy health in the midst of so much sickness as appears to be about you in the south. I suppose you will feel afraid to go any way about. The Lord seems to be speaking to us as a nation. He has long been speaking to us in His Word, but we, in general, are become deaf to His warnings, refusing to return to Him by repentance, attending on means rather as a custom than with a desire to profit. Holding the form, but denying the power, we are become lukewarm, loving our ease and idols; therefore we say (in our conversation), "Depart from us for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." He seems now to take another way with us—the rod—but fools will not understand it. Some of His dear ones will be preserved as the apple of the eye; these will, like doves, mourn each one for his own sins. "Blessed are ye that mourn, for ye shall be comforted." Mourning often because they cannot mourn, often weeping for an absent God and for those things which grieve Him from themselves and others. Tears of this kind will be laid up in His bottle. A spirit that weeps for sin is a precious jewel, it is the fulfilment of the promise: "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh," that is, an heart that will weep for an absent God and the cause of that absence. Yet

these tears are not seen by the creature, they consist of a drop of grief in the soul. If a child had offended a parent, and knew it to be an offence, the frowns on the face of the father would take the sweetness out of the child's meat, drink, bed, and company. Nothing comforts him but the smile on his father's countenance, hence he refuses to be comforted till the cause of that frown is taken away, that is, by pardon. In this state, at times, the bands will be loosed and liberty given to open his case before the Lord, like Hannah, who poured her heart out before the Lord, and her liberty was at hand, her countenance was no more sad. She then could bear the cross with submission. This is the fruit of infinite love: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." The Lord may perhaps let the soul into His secrets, so as to see his name engraven on the Lord's heart. "Set me as a seal on thine heart, and as a seal on thine arm." "I have engraven thee on the palms of my hand." This will heal the wounded soul, raise the poor from the dust, and the needy from the dunghill. This we should desire as the one thing needful, that thus the Lord would let out so much of Himself as to mortify sin, that we could say, "Whom have we in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth we desire besides thee," as to become strangers and sojourners on earth as our fathers were, looking for a better country, that is an heavenly. Before we come to this, something will be done—right hands, right feet cut off, right eyes plucked out. This cannot be easy for flesh and blood, yet the Spirit of grace can do it. These right hand idols are by the Spirit put in one scale in the soul and the Saviour in another, so that we must part with one or the other, God or Mammon. If one were left to himself he would part with God and eternal life before he would part with anything, but the Spirit opens the nature of eternity and the value of the soul, and the happiness which is in God's favour, so that the soul chooses Him at the expense of all creature comfort. Moses "chose to suffer afflictions with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Others took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, others parted with their lives rather than with Him. Faith makes time short, eternity long, the comforts of the world empty without Christ, the comforts of eternity infinite in sweetness and duration. "Mary hath chosen the good part that shall not be taken from her." This was Ruth's state when the trial came that she must make her choice. Grace made a stand, loosed her soul from creature comfort, cast her lot in with the people of God, ventured on Him in regard to time and eternity. This was sweet to herself afterwards, and the Lord did not allow her to be the loser here or in eternity. Orpah followed to the border of her country, but she, having no grace, could not venture all for Him, so turned her back, and so does every graceless professor, but these others have not their strength in themselves but in God. He has a hold of them and keeps them as the apple

of the eye, will be a little sanctuary to them in all places where He sends them.

Last night I had a letter from Mr. D. Macdonald, 18 Pollock Street, asking me to assist at the Communion in Duke Street Church. I intend, if the Lord will, to go. Perhaps I may see you at that time. We all enjoy health. I was complaining a good deal since March till within a month of pain in my side, but I feel now much better. Mr. Alexander Cook, Stratherrick, has been rather poorly of late, and has not preached for some weeks. His complaint is bronchitis. The Lord be with you.

Yours sincerely,

ARCHD. COOK.

(XII.)

DAVIOT FREE MANSE, 15th April, 1864.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I know you will be wondering at not hearing from me for so long a time. I have now got so feeble as to be unable to write anything, and I find dictating troublesome, so I trust you will excuse me. My mind sometimes goes your way, and my thoughts are often among the friends with whom I was formerly acquainted. In general they are now in another world. I now feel myself almost among strangers who in general are content with the present world. I am getting very feeble in mind and body, so that I can do little. Yet Jesus liveth who was once dead, but is now alive and is the ruler of heaven and earth. The thought that revived Jacob in his old age was that Joseph lived and was ruler in Egypt. The thought that Jesus lives who was once dead must be reviving to a poor weary sinner that can do nothing but sin and cast himself upon Him for eternal salvation. I see by a notice I got that He has been sorely afflicting you. I trust that you may be enabled to bow submissively to the rod as coming from the hand of a Father. I hope the other members of your family are well. We had letters from my son Charles this morning from New Zealand. He is well pleased there and enjoys good health. Should you happen to be in Inverness at any time, it would give us all pleasure to see you here. I am not able to continue. I will be glad to hear from you soon. All here join in kindest regards to you and your household.

I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

ARCHD. COOK.

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."—Lamen. iii. 26.

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."—James iv. 7.

The Pope's View of Scotland.

THE Pope has just addressed a letter to his bishops in Scotland. It is dated the 25th day of July. He repeats the old figments of the Romish guardianship of the Scriptures, and its infallible exposition of them, transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass. He also takes occasion to review the past history of Scotland, and describes our glorious Reformation as the terrible storm of the sixteenth century. He is more hopeful of the present time. He says, "There are indeed some signs which lead us to hope that, by the grace of God, a brighter religious future awaits the Scottish people. We see that Catholics are more liberally and kindly dealt with as time goes on, that Catholic doctrines are no longer publicly held up to scorn, as perhaps was formerly the case, but, on the contrary, are favourably considered by many, and accepted by not a few. We also see that false views and opinions, which effectively prevent the perception of truth, are gradually disappearing." This is the Pope's view of our country, and truly we ought to be ashamed of ourselves. He rejoices that our churches are welcoming the delusions of Arminianism and Ritualism, and that the pure doctrines of the Gospel, which he esteems "false views and opinions," are "gradually disappearing." The *Scotsman* of 28th July had a trenchant article on the subject, in which it is shown that the Pope must view with joy and hope the proposed union of the Free and U.P. Churches. The following is a large quotation:—"But a careful perusal of the Papal dissertation suggests the possibility, if not the probability, that Leo XIII. may be a close observer of the latest movements of the dissenting churches of Scotland, and may have detected in some of them the nearest approach that has been made since the Reformation to the true attitude of the Roman Church in respect to the conservatism and authoritative definition of theological truth. It is true that the Free Church has not yet displayed any inclination to transfer its allegiance to the Pope of Rome. But it seems so ready at times to put implicit faith in a pope of its own, and to pay him unquestioning obedience, that Leo may be excused if he imagines that it is the form rather than the spirit of popery that is wanting to it. But the feature of this most perfect product of Scottish Protestantism which appears most likely to indicate to the Romish eye a natural inclination to embrace the truth is its recent adoption of the doctrine that the Church and not the Bible is the final authority on matters of faith. Leo XIII. gives expression, it will be seen, to his admiration for the reverence and love of the Scottish people for the inspired writings. In their reverence for the sacred Scriptures "they are in agreement with the Catholic Church." But the agreement between our dissenting Churches and the Catholic Church goes further. Leo goes on to say that

the Scriptures need a living perpetual *magisterium* to explain them authoritatively, and this authority is found in the Church. From the Reformation till within the last few years this has been regarded by our Scottish Protestant Churches as one of the damnable doctrines of Rome. But in their latest documents the Free and United Presbyterian Churches have appropriated it, or perhaps, we should say, propose to appropriate it. Considering the Pope's keen interest in Scotland, we may be sure that he has taken care to be furnished with all the papers bearing on the proposed union of these Churches; and it is easy to imagine the joy and hope with which he must have read the questions to which ministers and other office-bearers of the united Church will be required to give affirmative answers. He will see with satisfaction that, after declaring their belief that the Scriptures are "the only rule of faith and life," they are required to add their acknowledgment that "the doctrine of their Church" "expresses the sense in which they understand the Holy Scriptures." That is pure Catholic doctrine, subject to the qualification in the mind of the Pope that "this Church" is not the true Church. But once the position is established that the Scriptures must be understood in the sense of the doctrine of the Church, it may well seem to Leo XIII., as indeed it may seem to others, that it is but a short step to the recognition of that Church whose authority in the exposition of doctrine has been longest and is most universally acknowledged. When all this is considered, the Pope's faith in the impending conversion of Scotland is perhaps not so pathetically absurd as free-thinking persons may suppose. Hearing on the one hand of the worshipping of saintly images at St. Giles' and elsewhere in the Established Church of Scotland, and, on the other hand, the new claim of the dissenting Churches to set forth in their own formularies the sense in which the Scriptures must be understood, the venerable Pontiff may well be excused for yielding to the dear delusion that the heart of ecclesiastical Scotland is again beginning to beat in unison with that of ecclesiastical Rome."

A Soul-Ruining Doctrine.

WHAT doctrine is that say you, that we may reject and oppose it? It is the current doctrine of this day, which is flooding almost all the professedly Protestant Churches; and a doctrine which the great majority of the professors and preachers of these Churches teach and preach; and which the heart of every unregenerate sinner, instead of rejecting and opposing, receives with delight and imbibes, just as the infant imbibes the milk from the mother's or the nurse's breast: the one to the nourishment of the body, the other to the ruin of the soul. It is the doctrine,

that "man is a son of God;" which, traced to its ultimate issues, results in "the universal fatherhood of God, and the universal sonship of man;" which is directly opposed to all the inspired revelation of God in His Word—the Bible. It is the doctrine of the devil, who was a liar and a murderer from the beginning: who said to Eve "Ye shall not surely die;" and who now says by this doctrine "Ye have not died, ye are the children of God still; sin has not reigned unto death."

The Bible clearly shows that, in reference to man, death is threefold, viz., spiritual, temporal and eternal. Spiritual death took immediate effect on the first Adam's soul as the result of his first sin. Temporal death took effect on his body over 900 years thereafter. Eternal death is the final "wages of sin;" and, but for the provision of sovereign, unmerited grace, would have been so in the case of the first Adam and all his offspring, as certainly as it was in that of "the angels that sinned." The Bible certainly states that, "Adam was the son of God;" and angels are repeatedly called "sons of God" in the Bible; but the Bible also shows as clearly that sin converted angels into devils, and the first Adam and all his descendants by natural generation into children of the devil. In no instance can such disastrous soul-ruining consequences follow an unwarranted substitution of the present for the past tense, as in the assumption that, because Adam was a son of God by creation, as, according to his status in creation he came perfect, pure and holy from his Creator's hand, therefore his descendants, "dead in trespasses and sins," are sons of God without regeneration, the new birth, justification or adoption.

Professor Bruce, F.C. College, Glasgow, says, in his "Apologetics, or Christianity Defensively Stated," "that Christ's view of man, as indefeasably a son of God, involves that man occupies a most important place in the theory of the universe." Any sane person, unless wilfully blind, reading "Christ's view of man" recorded in His own words to those who claimed God as their Father, must conclude that, Professor Bruce is chargeable with the guilt, first, of fabricating a falsehood or lie, and second, of fathering that lie on Christ. In the gospel according to John we read, chap. viii., v. 41, that the Jews said to Christ "We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God." "Jesus said unto them, if God were your Father ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (v. 44). "Ye are of your father the devil, and his lusts ye will do" (v. 44), &c. Can language furnish a more antagonistic contrast than Professor Bruce's false postulate belying "Christ's view of man," and "Christ's view of man" recorded by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and given for a divine foundation to "Christianity Defensively Stated" in "the Scriptures which cannot be broken," and for promoting "the joy of faith" in the heart of every sinner "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," every one of whom is

a living member of Christ's mystical body, the Church "against which the gates of hell shall not prevail."

This doctrine is soul-ruining, because it "indefeasably" "involves" a denial of the truth that, sin dissolved the relationship between God and man, even as it did in the case of "the angels that kept not their first estate," and who occupied a higher status than man in creation, which Professor Bruce calls the theory of the universe. Professor Dods in his St. Giles' sermon calls Peter's confession that which Christ declared to be a Divine revelation, given to Peter by God the Father, viz., "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Dods says that either theory, *i.e.*, believing or not believing the divinity of Christ "makes good Christians," thus making, what Christ pronounces a Divine revelation, to be only a philosophical theory. If philosophy or "science, falsely so called," ever ran mad without bit, bridle or straitjacket, it has done so in the present-day professors of theology; and what can disciples preach but what their masters teach. But again, the doctrine under consideration is soul-ruining, because it believes the doctrine preached by Christ to Nicodemus "except a man" (which "involves" every man), "be born again," or from above, "he cannot see the kingdom of God." As in the economy of nature, which is the creature of God, so in the economy of grace. There can be no birth in the one without generation, nor in the other without regeneration; even as in his first Epistle, Peter blesses God . . . "who according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again" literally regenerated us "unto a lively hope." And Peter shows the foundation of this hope to be "the triumphant resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead;" and its object—for no hope can live without an object—"an incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading inheritance." The reiterated "amen" to Nicodemus of Him who is The Amen, "the faithful and true witness" is equivalent to the oath of Jehovah, who was in heaven when speaking to Nicodemus as Godman upon earth, and who says "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."

What constituted angels sons of God, and similarly man a son of God by creation, was the love of God filling the heart—the essential centre of life—and thence pervading the entire existence in each with spiritual life and the image of God; but when sin took possession of the heart, it utterly emptied it of divine love, and despoiled the whole being of the divine image simultaneously, neither of which can be restored but by "the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost," which, "according to the measure of the gift of Christ" restores both simultaneously. And by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, for the sanctification of all with whom He thus deals, He fits them through grace for glory. "Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His; therefore, he is not "a son of God." But the above doctrine is soul-ruining because it ignores, and virtually

denies, all need either of the Holy Spirit's regenerating grace, or His sanctifying grace, resulting from His indwelling.

But this doctrine is soul-ruining because it not only belies the doctrine preached by Christ to Nicodemus, but it also virtually denies that, it was essentially necessary that Christ should come, God's unspeakable gift, to save self-ruined sinners. Although angels and man are called sons of God in the Bible, as both came relatively perfect, pure and holy from His hand by creation; yet neither angel nor man could "redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." "For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth"—would fail or be awaiting—"for ever," had not God in sovereign, unmerited love and mercy, "according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus," "when the fulness of the time was come, sent forth His Son,"—His co-essential and co-eternal Son (and He could not be co-eternal were he not co-essential)—"made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." But if they are sons what need have they of adoption, or rather how can they be adopted, for adoption means the place or position of a son? They, therefore, only among fallen mankind are the sons of God who have been adopted into His family and have received the spirit of adoption through Jesus Christ.

J. B.

An t-Aonadh.

O CHIONN beagan mhiosan air ais bha paipear a sgrìobh an t-Urr. Mr. Mac-Colla mu chuis an aonaidh a tighinn a mach a chuid 's a chuid anns an leabhrian mhiosail so. A reir mar is e comain nan Gaidheal cuimhne a bhi aca air a leithid do cheann-iuil agus a bha Mr. Mac-Colla ann is coir dhoibh a thoirt fainear an ni a sgrìobh e; oir bha e 'dionadh steidh na h-Eaglais a reir mar a chaidh a suidheachadh aig am an Dealachaidh o na h-ionnsuidhean a bha luchd-an-aonaidh a toirt air a tilgeadh bun os cionn. 'Nuair a thainig an sgrìobhadh a mach an toiseach bu mhor am meas anns an robh e aig na teachdairean treun a thog an cruithear suas anns an Taobh-Tuath mar a bha Mr. Mathannach a bha ann an Gearloch a thubhairt ri 'choimhthional gu'm bu mhor a chomain a chuir an 'Tighearn air Mr. Mac-Colla 'nuair a thug e cothrom dha a leithid do phaipear a sgrìobhadh-ni a tha 'g innseadh cho measail agus a bha seanairean na h-Eaglais air a phaipear; agus gu dearbh cha b-uilear do ar luchd-leughaidh ged a rachadh iad troimh dh' fheuch an daingnich iad air an inntinn na nithean cudthromach a tha Mr. Mac-Colla a laimhseachadh. Oir an t-aonadh a bhathas a feuchainn ri dheanamh an uair sin thathas a feuchainn ri dheanamh an trath-sa agus cha'n ann na's lugha cunnart a tha ann an diugh na bha ann an uair sin.

BHA gluasad ann 'nuair a sgrìobh Mr. Mac-Colla an aghaidh aonaidh ach sheas moran do na seann-fhianuisean agus rinn iad so aithnichte gu'm b-fhearr leo dealachadh ris a mhuinntir a threigeadh seann-steidh na h-Eaglais na dealachadh ris an steidh sin. Bha bacadh ann an rathad an aonaidh. Bha puingean teagaisg a bha 'nan ceisdean fosgailte anns an Eaglais U. P. no na Cleirich aonaichte nach fheudadh a bhi 'nan ceisdean fosgailte anns an Eaglais Shaoir. Nan aonadh a' mhor-chuid anns an Eaglais Shaoir ris na cleirich aonaichte threigeadh iad steidh na h-Eaglais aca fein ann a bhi toirt cead do na ceisdean fosgailte sin-oir dh' fheumadh saorsa a bhi aig luchd-dreuchd am beachd fein a bhi aca air na puingean sin agus cha 'n e puingean eutrom a bha ann. B' ionnan sin mi ta agus an fhirinn agus a bhreug a chur air an aon chomhnard cead a thoirt do'n bhreug a bhi air a h-aideachadh agus air a teagasg. Cha'n urrainn sin a bhi ann gun a bhreug a bhi air a roghnachadh roimh 'n fhirinn.

ACH ciod e na puingean a bha ann an so. Bha da ni araidh ann air an robh eadar-dhealachadh beachd air a cheadachadh anns an Eaglais U. P. B'e aon diubh so gun robh an cead aig muinntir a bhi teagasg nach coir do'n staid gnuis no cuideachadh sam bith a thoirt do dh' aobhar Chrìosd ni a tha calgdhireach an aghaidh an doigh anns am bheil Focal Dhia a labhairt mu 'n ni ; oir Tha Chrìosd na cheann os ceann nan uile nithe d'a Eaglais agus anns na h-uile nithe tha an staid no an t-uachdaran sìobhalta air a ghabhail a steach. A ris an cinneach agus an rioghachd nach dean seirbhis do Eaglais an De bheo fasaichear iad ni a tha 'g innseadh gur coir do'n staid gnuis a thoirt do dh' aobhar Chrìosd.

ACH tha an leisgeul gu tric air a chleachdadh nach aithne do'n uachdarran Sìobhalta aobhar Chrìosd ann agus cia mar is urrainn e gnuis a thoirt dha mar sin? Cha d' aithuich uachdarrain an t-saoghail so Tighearn na gloire ach cha do shaor sin iad o chionta ann a bhi dortadh fola neochiontaich agus ann a bhi 'cur cul ris. Ged a tha an t-uachdaran aimsireil anns an duthaich so a riaghladh air son toil an t-sluaigh a thoirt gu buil gidheadh a reir mar a tha e fiachaichte air gach duine fa leth Dia ann an Chrìosd aithneachadh agus aideachadh tha e fiachaichte air an riaghlair Chrìosd aithneachadh agus aideachadh 'na aobhar. Oir 'nuair is coir do mhuinntir Chrìosd aideachadh is coir dhoibh sin a dheanamh anns gach daimh anns am feud iad a bhi agus mar so tha e 'na dhleasdanas air rioghachdan mar rioghachdan gnuis agus cuideachadh a thoirt do dh' aobhar Chrìosd.

NIS aig am an dealachaidh bha an Eaglais Shaoir a togail fianuis an aghaidh dha bhuidhinn. Air an aon laimh bha iad a cur an aghaidh nam Fein-thoileach no na *Voluntaries* mar a's fearr

a thu gear. Air an laimh so bha iad a togail fianuis air son coirichean Chriosd mar cheann thar na h-uile nithe air son na h-Eaglais agus an daimh ri so dleasdanas na rioghachd air cuid-eachadh le 'aobhar air an talamh. Ach nuair a bha iad ag innseadh do'n rioghachd gur coir dhi agus gur h'e a comain gnuis a thoirt do dh' aobhar Chriosd bha i ag agairt gu'n gabhtadh toil fhoillsichte Chriosd mar riaghailt a thaobh an daimh so. Shuidhich Esan luchd-riaghlaidh agus doigh-riaghlaidh anns an Eaglais eadar-dhealaichte ris agus 'na aite fein gun a bhi an iochdar do'n riaghlair aimsireil. Thog an Eaglais fianuis air an taobh so gur coir do dh' Eaglais Chriosd a bhi saor o 'n is e Criosd a Ceann. Tha ceannas aige air rioghachdan uime sin is coir dhoibh gun bheantuinn ri 'choirichean mar cheann a chuirp eadhon 'Eaglais. Mar so bha iad air an laimh eile a togail fianuis an adhaidh na muinntir a dh' fhuirich anns an Eaglais Steidhichte.

LEIS an t-seasamh so cha'n faodadh e bhi 'na cheisd fhosgailte anns an Eaglais Shaoir am bheil no nach eil dlensdanas air an Stàid a thaobh gnuis a thoirt do dh' aobhar Chriosd. Nan aointeadh ri muinntir aig an robh so 'na cheisd fhosgailte bhiodh earrann do dh' fhianuis an Dealachaidh air a tilgeadh air falbh. Sheas moran gu trenn an aghaidh aonaidh air a leithid so do bhonn agus mar sin bha so 'na bhacadh do'n aonadh a ghabhail aite. Gus am biodh na bacaidhean a bha ann air an toirt a mach as an rathad cha'n fheudadh aonadh a bhi air a dheanamh. Ach bha ni araidh eile a bha 'na cheisd fhosgailte am measg nan cleireach aonaichte. Ma gheibh sinn an cothrom dh' faodadh gun innis sinn beagan mu dheighinn an ni so an athmbios agus an daimh a tha eadar an t-Achd mineachaidh 1892 agus an t-Aonadh a bhi air a thoirt mun cuairt.

An Tighearna ri fhaicinn ann an obair a Chruthachaidh.—ROM. i. 20.

By REV. D. MACDONALD, SHIELDAIG.

A BHEIL sibhs' air an talamh toirt an aire mar tha,
Ni mór bh'air a thasgadh anns na flaitheas gu h-àrd,
Anns a chumhnanta shiorruidh mu 'n robh ghrian oirnn a' dearris
'S mu 'n robh reultan a's gealach air an athar a' snàmh.

Thig leinn agus amhaire air sgaradh nan tràth,
Aig briseadh na faire air maduinn cheud là,
Seall na nèamhan 's an talamh, ged tha falamh a's fàs,
'S an cumhnanta shiorruidh a tighinn a' fianuis cho làn.

Seall na h-ullaichean mòra tha ro-oirdhearc an gnè,
Tha nis a co-chordadh ri ro-ordachadh Dhe,
Na cuantan a' dortadh le gach seorsa do eiseig,
'S an talamh 's na beanntan mar bhean bainnse fo sgeimh.

Thoir suil air a mhaise tha an gathan na grein',
 Na reultan 'sa ghealach, san t-athar gu léir,
 Am bogha-frois le chuid dhathan 'dearg-lasadh nan speur
 'S ag innse le 'mhais' mu ghlòir 's mu mhaitheasan Dhé.

Tha mille do mhltean do chrodh-laoigh feadh gach sléibh,
 Caoirich, gobhair a's eachaibh, 's eunlaith mhaiseach na speur
 Il-nile creutair dhiu seasmhach, nan nàdur dealaicht o cheil,
 'S iad a' còrdadh nan cleachdadh ri do reachdan a Dhé.

Tha na coilltean 's na preasan do dh-coin cheileireach làn,
 A' seinn gu suilbhearra ceolmhor air do ghlòir-sa gun tàmh,
 Tha iad ag innse le'n còmhra gu bheil thu glòrmhor a's àrd,
 'S bidh na fìthich òg carraich 'g iarraidh beath' ort gach trà.

Rinn thu'n leomhan san dràgon, 's gach creutair snágach fo'n ghréin,
 'S rinn thu chuileag san seangan nan gnath dealaicht o cheil,
 Cha'n'eil creutair air talamh nach eil fo d' smachdachadh féin
 'S tha t-àrd riaghladh glòrmhor toirt dhoibh seoladh gu léir.

Tha cuid diubh 'tarruing beatha o charcais a cheil',
 'S tha cuid eile 'g òl meala feadh nan glacan 's nan geug,
 Tha iad uile nan dòighean air son do ghlòir-sa gach treud,
 'S bidh an Eaglais 'seinn ceoil duit air son do dhoighean gu léir.

Tha gleanntan a's glacan le do mhaitheasan làn,
 Gu cuirnneach, boidheach le neoinin a' fàs,
 'S tha seamrag a's ròsan le dearg chòmhdach fo bhlàth,
 A's feur na machrach tha 'g innse gu bheil mais ort tha làn.

Tha na lilighean sneachdaidh air gach achadh a' fàs,
 Feadh nan raontan 's nan glacan tha mil mar bhain' air a bhlàr,
 Tha thu iongantach, maiseach anns na slaitheas gu h-àrd,
 Dhuit a sheinneas na h-ainglean, 's tu'n annsachd san gràdh.

Tha na cuantan a' beucail, 's ag eirdh gu h-àrd,
 'S chuir thu crìochan gu léir romp' thar nach leum iad gu bràth.
 Mar sin tha'n cumhnanta sìorruidh coilont anns gach pàirt,
 Is tha gliocas neo-chrìochnach ga thoirt nar fianuis gach là.

Tha do gliocas do ramusaicht, cha'n fhaigh sinn ceann aig gu bràth,
 Tha'n diabol fo d' cheannsal 'sa chuid ainglean an sàs,
 Bidh do ghlòir-sa gun taing dhoibh ga seinn sa champa gu h-àrd,
 Le h-ainglean 's le daoine rinn thu shaoradh o'n bhàs.

Rinn thu reothadh a's sneachda, rinn thu gail'ion a's fuachd,
 'S tu rinn an tein'-athar san dealanach luath,
 Rinn thu ifrinn 's na slaitheas 'g eadardhealachadh uait,
 'S e 's ainm dhuit Iehobhah 's tha thu mòr anns gach buagh.

Sud na buaghan tha farsuing, do gach maitheas tha làn,
 Is cha leir dhuinn fhaicinn trian deth cheartas do ghràis,
 'S tha do thuigs' as ar sealladh mar chuan gun chladach gun tràigh,
 Tha do chumhachd a reir sin thar nan speuran gu h-àrd.

Tha thu gun toiseach gun deireadh, bith cha'n'eil ann cho àrd
 Rì Dia mòr na cruinne— uile chumhachd nan àgh,
 Cha'n'eil teang' ann am billibh d'an aithn' innse mar tha,
 An cuan ud cho domhain, 's a thomnan co àrd.

Chi sinn cuid deth do chumhachd anns a chruthachadh mhòr
 Aig briseadh na fàire, 'n cuan an talamh 's na neoil,
 Anns a' mhìonaid gun mhoille tigh'nn a mach o do mheoir,
 Tha ghrian, na reultan sa' ghealach ro mhaiseach le' ghlòir.

'S tu annsachd nan aingeal anns na slaitheas gu h-àrd,
 'S ann ort a tha'n talamh 's a chuid fheachdan a' tàmh,
 Cha'n 'eil creutair air thalamh nach 'eil ag amharc an àird,
 Chum 's gu'n coisgeadh tu'm pathadh 's an aeras 'na thrà.

Nuair a chruthaich thu Adhamh bha e làn le do ghloir,
 Le eòlas, naomhachd a's fìrinn bha e riomhach gu leoir,
 Shruth e mach o do lamhan mar aingeal gun ghò—
 S tha rùn dìomhair na diabolachd 'g ar fagail shìos ann an ceò.

Notes and Comments.

The Contents of this Column, save where distinguished by initials, are contributed by John M'Neilage, Glasgow.

The Prince of Wales.—On Monday, 18th July, while at Baron Rothschild's country seat, the Prince of Wales badly injured his knee. His Highness now lies at Marlborough House, London, pending his recovery. In order to beguile the time, the telephone system has been made to serve. At night, when London seeks music and mirth, the various theatres and music halls are switched on to the Prince's wire, and so, lying on his bed, he can hear all the best songs and comedies of the day. Thus, while the "chastening of the Almighty" is on him, does our future king incline his ear to instruction and apply his mind to wisdom.

The Bicycle.—The popularity of this expensive toy has now reached the absurd stage. A bicycle costs £10; nevertheless every other man, woman, and youth has a bicycle. The vendors of light literature are crying that the wheel has killed the magazines and the novels. Solid people perceive well that it is killing out any remainders of Sabbath keeping and church going which might have survived among our youth. People in town on their way to Sabbath morning service have now to keep a sharp eye lest they be run down by one of these mounted nuisances urging his rebellious career to the distant country on the Lord's Day. Nor, suppose this Sabbath-breaking feature were awaiting, is this bicycle craze sinless. Machines and cycle suits cost solid sums of money. Many young men and women

who in reality are only good for shillings have to spend pounds. This means pinching, scraping, and diverting the just dues and gains of others. There is at present a vexatious dislocation experienced in many spheres of industry, and the diversion of the stream of capital into this ridiculous bicycle business is one main cause. We are aware that to speak to the devotees of the wheel is to speak to the wild winds or the wild asses, nevertheless it is a luxury to lift up a testimony against an absurd wasteful form of idolatry.

How to get on in Life.—In the *Young Man* for August sixteen successful men of business supply information on this interesting topic. The sixteenth man is the only one who adduces the fear and favour of God as factors in his success. The rest harp mainly on honesty, punctuality, fairness, industry, &c. These virtues, we admit, have their place in a successful career, but the exercise of them is not the deep determining reason why this or that man attains, nor, we may add, is the non-exercise of these virtues always the reason why a man fails of success. Solomon long ago noted a strange interruption of the laws of cause and effect in this disposing of the human lot. He says, "I returned and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong, neither riches to men of understanding, nor favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to all."

If we desired information on the subject of success in life we should probably not consult the authorities named in the *Young Man*. Their idea of success seems to us too shallow, too confined. Their successful man figures only as a conqueror over earthly poverty and obscurity. But there is a deeper and more difficult problem to be solved by every son of Adam, and a triumph over outward circumstances gained, as is most commonly the case, by shirking this other conflict, will be one day seen to be no triumph at all, but a ghastly failure. To make one's way in the world, but withal to save one's soul, these are the joint conditions we must insist on in this enquiry, and we do not allow that to be a successful career at all which is wrought out without respect to deeper problems.

In this view, a nameless old woman or obscure peasant, dying with a good hope and a surplus sixpence, has achieved a success which eclipses the records of all the Rothschilds and millionaires in the two hemispheres.

When spiritual problems are laid to sleep it is more easy to deal with material ones. For this reason we think we are entitled to discount many of the industrial victories and financial achievements of the nineteenth century. It is observable that the adherents of churches which evade the sterner aspects of theology are in many instances well to pass in life. The Morisonians have much wealth among them. It is a good religion for getting on in the world. Quakerism also tends to material prosperity, and a

great many present-day worshippers in any popular church are, we fear, among the rich who have received their consolation. Nevertheless there is a relation, not to be disputed, between the fear of God and material prosperity, and we will prove this from the case of these same degenerate Christians. It is true there is much wealth in the bowels of Lanarkshire and Ayrshire, but poverty-stricken Spain and Turkey have also wealth above and under the ground. Why is the south of Scotland a scene of rich traffic and well-peopled cities, and the spacious surface of Spain and Turkey surrendered to decay of men and wealth? We know that many generations of Israelites were blessed for the sake of Abraham and David, and in the same way many generations of Scotchmen have been blessed for the sake of their righteous forefathers—those saints of the covenant whose tears and blood have consecrated the waste places of Ayr and Lanark. The sufferings and cries of these saints have, we believe, entailed an inheritance of material prosperity on these places, though the degenerate race who now inhabit these have forgotten the God of their fathers.

The Sabbath in Edinburgh.—A military band now plays every Sabbath afternoon on the Edinburgh Castle Hill, and the citizens like it. There was lately a motion made to have music in the Princes Street Gardens on the Sabbath, but this has been disallowed by a vote of the Town Council—18 votes against 15.

£8,000,000.—During the next four years Britain intends to spend this sum building 20 new warships. The supposed necessity for this great outlay is the growing naval power of Russia.

The War.—As a combatant Spain is nearly spent. Her fleets have done nothing. The Phillippine Islands are in the hands of the enemy. Cuba is all but taken—the important town of Santiago having been captured on 16th July. To-day (28th July), we hear rumours of peace negotiations. It is likely the terms of the conqueror will be severe, and will reduce Spain to a very shrunken disabled state.

The Financial Statement.—Copies of the Yearly Financial Statement of the F.P. Church may be had on application to Mr. Angus Clunas, General Treasurer, Inverness, or to the Publisher of the *F.P. Magazine*.

Death of Principal Caird.—The decease of this eminent pulpit orator and exponent of philosophy took place on Saturday, 30th July, at Greenock. He has held the office of Principal of Glasgow University since 1873. A large number of laudatory pulpit and press notices have followed his decease. In these we can hardly join. The reason will at once appear from the

following quotation:—"Dr. Caird did not tread the well-worn Calvinistic path. He approached theology on its philosophic and not on its dogmatic side." This sentence is from an article by his successor in office, Dr. Story, and it indicates clearly enough the truth of the matter, viz.—that Dr. Caird was a learned and eloquent errorist—a blind leader of the blind.

The new Professor of Church History, in lieu of Dr. Story, who has succeeded to the Principalship, is Dr. Cooper of Aberdeen, a rank ritualist.

Death of Bismarck.—This famous Prussian Statesman passed away on Saturday, 30th July, at Freidrichsruhe, aged 83. He was a strong man, mentally and physically, and he has left his mark both on the map and the history of Europe. The guiding idea, during his time, of Prussian politics, has been the consolidation of Germany into one empire under the sceptre of the King of Prussia. The realisation of this idea has been largely owing to the strong hand of Bismarck aided by the military genius of Von Moltke, the Prussian Commander-in-Chief. Austria was paralysed at Sadowa (1866), and France, the other rival, was completely crushed in the war of 1870. In internal politics Bismarck was the determined enemy of Socialism. He also essayed to limit the powers and privileges of the Papacy in Germany, but in this contest he was forced to give way. The deceased statesman's nature was not without a mixture of piety and pathos as appears by the following extract from a letter to his wife describing the critical meeting with Napoleon III. at the time of his downfall. "In a small room, about ten feet square, with a deal table and two straw chairs, we (Bismarck and Napoleon) sat for an hour. What a contrast with our last meeting in the Tuileries in 1867! Our conversation was necessarily difficult, as it was not possible for me to touch things that might be painful to one struck down by God's mighty arm."

The Travelling Season.—This season is now proceeding apace. Modern populations are more and more being massed into large cities, and country industries are languishing. It is a providential arrangement, therefore, to counterpoise this preponderance of city life, that the multitudes who inhabit these large centres have such a unanimous inclination to seek the fields and the seashore. Sunshine and fresh air are good for jaded nerves and wearied frames. Nevertheless, we must keep the sun and the sea breeze in their own place, and not expect from them, or from any other creature, what they cannot give. The deep disquietude which gnaws at the heart of every man and woman who has not found Christ has a decided share in this present-day swarming to and fro of the travelling public. The poet Byron, pursued by his diseased self, wandered wearily over land and sea, cloying himself with sights of historic interest and scenes of sin. He candidly confesses that his effort was a failure. In the

following lines he speaks for himself and a great number of his fellow-prodigals :—

“We wither from our youth ; we gasp away,
Sick, sick, unfound the boon, unslaked the thirst,
Though to the last, on verge of our decay,
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first.”

On the other hand, let the following words of Pomponio Algeri, the Italian martyr, shew how much happiness may be found at home, yea, how heaven may be enjoyed in a prison :—“To allay the grief you feel on my account, I am anxious to impart to you a share of my consolation, that we may rejoice together, and return thanks to the Lord with songs. I speak what to man will appear incredible ; I have found honey in the bowels of the lion (who will believe it?), pleasantness in a dismal pit, soothing prospects of life in the gloomy mansions of death, joy in an infernal gulf ! Where others weep, I rejoice : where others tremble, I am erect ; in the most distressing situation I have found the highest delight, in solitude the best fellowship, and in galling chains rest. The prison is severe indeed to the guilty, but sweet to the innocent ; distilling dew and nectar, sending forth milk and all delectable things. This desert place and wild is to me a spacious valley, the noblest spot on earth. Not an hour nor a day has passed without some benefit : the true love of God is now engraven on my heart ; the Lord has filled me with joy ; I rest in peace. Who then will venture to condemn this life of mine, and to pronounce my days unhappy ? From the delectable garden of the Leonine prison, 21st July, 1555.”

The Prince and Princess of Wales and Romanism.—

We learn from the *Gospel Magazine* of this month that the following resolution was unanimously agreed to at a meeting of the Council of the Church Association held on the 16th ult. :—“The Council of the Church Association has learned with the deepest regret that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, has granted the use of the Imperial Institute for the holding of a bazaar on behalf of a Roman Catholic Institution, possibly in ignorance of the fact that it is conducted by the nuns of the ‘Convent of the Faithful Virgin,’ and that her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales has consented to open a fancy fair in connection therewith—unmindful of the fact that the claim of their royal house to the allegiance of the English people rests upon the pledges exacted by the British Constitution that the reigning family of this Protestant country shall hold itself aloof from the Pope of Rome and his agents, and shall maintain the ‘Protestant reformed religion established by law.’” The Church Association represents the evangelical party in the Church of England, and their faithfulness deserves commendation. The royal family seem to have very dim ideas of religion of any kind, but this does not free them from the guilt of their conformity to Rome.—J. S. S.

Mr. John Kensit.—This courageous Protestant in London, who some months ago served seven days in gaol for his protest at a ritualistic service, still carries on the good warfare. He was recently at another service of the same kind. The cross was lifted up, and the congregation prostrated themselves before it. Mr. Kensit held up the crucifix-idol in presence of the vicar and the congregation, and denounced the idolatry in the name of God and truth. He was charged before a police court with riotous conduct, but he appealed to Quarter Sessions. The latter held the charge not proven. Mr. Kensit, we understand, is delivering lectures on ritualism in several towns. His efforts have not been without fruit. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London have recently issued warnings against contravention in worship of the rules of the Church. This is so far good, but these warnings are so mildly put, and so qualified in their statements, that they will do virtually nothing after all to check the inroads of Romish doctrines and practices into the Church of England.—J. S. S.

The Bible.

WHAT is the Chart that marks the way
To guide poor pilgrims, lest they stray,
To the bright world of endless day?

The Word of God.

What is the Food, so pure and sweet,
Milk for the babe, and stronger meat
For those of riper age to eat?

God's precious Word.

What is the Medicine of the soul,
The balm to make the wounded whole?
Ah, spread its fame from pole to pole—

God's precious Word.

What is the Lamp that burns so bright,
That shines amidst the world's dark night,
And gives so true and safe a light?

God's precious Word.

What Mine is that which Christians own,
An ancient mine of wealth unknown,
A mine of truth, and truth alone?

God's precious Word.

What is that Sword, so sharp and bright,
With which all Christian soldiers fight,
And put their num'rous foes to flight?

God's precious Word.

What makes, throughout, the Saviour known,
Points all to Him, and Him alone,
And bids us claim Him as our own?

God's precious Word.